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7 March 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans (OIR)  
Colonel Paul S. Reinecke, USA (G-2)  
Captain B. E. Wiggin, USN (ONI)  
Colonel Willis B. Sawyer, USAF (AFOIN-2B2)  
Colonel Floyd E. Dunn, USA (JIG)  
Mr. Herbert Miller, Chairman, Joint Atomic  
Energy Intelligence Committee  
Mr. Karl Weber, Chairman, Scientific  
Estimates Committee

SUBJECT : NIE 11-7-55: Soviet Gross Capabilities for  
Attack Against US and Key Overseas Installations  
Through 1958

1. The attached terms of reference were agreed on at the meeting of the IAC representatives on Monday, 7 March.

2. All agencies and SEC are requested to contribute as they deem feasible. JAEIC is requested to contribute to I-A and B.

3. It is requested that contributions be received in this office by the close of business on Friday, 1 April.

*Paul A. Borel*

PAUL A. BOREL  
Deputy Assistant Director  
National Estimates

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C E N T R A L   I N T E L L I G E N C E   A G E N C Y

7 March 1955

SUBJECT:   TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 11-7-55:   SOVIET GROSS CAPABILITIES  
                                    FOR ATTACK AGAINST US AND KEY OVERSEAS INSTALLATIONS  
                                    THROUGH 1958

THE PROBLEM

To estimate gross Soviet capabilities for attacks on the US and key overseas installations\* as of mid-1955 and mid-1958 without taking into account the effectiveness of allied defenses and countermeasures.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1.   Since the last estimate on this subject was issued in September 1954, it is considered that revisions and additions to NIE 11-7A-54 should serve in many instances. The agencies are asked to review this paper and to submit new material for updating purposes with appropriate references to the paragraph numbers in NIE 11-7A-54. In addition, certain

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\*   The definition of key overseas installations in NIE 11-7A-54 can be used, unless a new list is provided.

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subjects such as air facilities and those operational factors which affect Soviet capabilities should be analyzed more fully than in NIE 11-7A-54.

In order to reflect most probable scales of attack as well as maximum scales of attack, it is important that much greater attention be paid to those operational factors which are essential to a realistic capabilities estimate. These subjects are covered in the supplementary questions below, and all sources of intelligence should be used in answering them.

QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. NUCLEAR WEAPONS

- A. What types of Soviet aircraft, guided and unguided missiles, guns, and naval vessels could be utilized for delivery of nuclear weapons against US and key overseas installations, during the period of this estimate? What would be the probable size and yield of nuclear weapons employed in each of the delivery methods?
- B. What will be the probable organization, facilities, and control mechanisms for stockpiling, handling, and making nuclear weapons available to tactical units? What is the probable minimum and maximum elapsed time under the Soviet system from the time of decision to use nuclear weapons to the time the weapons could be launched?

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II. NUMBER AND CAPACITY OF SOVIET AIRFIELDS AVAILABLE FOR ATTACKS  
AGAINST THE US

- A. What is the number, location, and capacity of airfields for the various  
/long-range aircraft in the following areas for staging  
operations and for continuous operations: (1) Chukotski;  
(2) Kola; (3) other Arctic coastal areas; (4) Leningrad  
(200-mile radius of Leningrad); (5) Kamchatka; and (6) Baltic-  
East Germany (200 miles inland from Baltic coastline)?
- B. How well do these airfields meet present requirements? What  
additional airfields will probably be required in the above  
areas by mid-1958 and what airfields will probably require  
improvement? In what areas will they probably be constructed,  
and what would be the length of time required for such con-  
struction and improvement and what scale of effort would be re-  
quired in terms of manpower, number and types of construction  
units, and logistic support?
- C. What will be the probable minimum requirements of Soviet  
airfields in terms of length of runways, weight-bearing

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capacity, parking facilities, maintenance facilities, housing facilities, and servicing facilities for long-range air offensives against the US in mid-1955 and mid-1958?

How do present air facilities meet these requirements?

What evidence is there that medium and heavy bombers have actually used the airfields in A above.

- D. What is the number, capacity, and location of permanent interior bases of the LRAF? What are Soviet capabilities for attacking the US from these bases without using forward staging in mid-1955 and in mid-1958? What additional interior bases will be required and what bases would probably have to be improved by mid-1958?
- E. What would be the probable timing of moves from interior bases to the staging bases, and the time and scope of prior operations in preparation for strikes against the US in mid-1955 and mid-1958? Would such activities be susceptible to detection prior to such attacks?
- F. In general, what will be the major strengths and weaknesses in mid-1955 and mid-1958 of the Soviet air facilities in terms of offensive strikes against the US? In particular, what bearing do logistical problems and problems of cold weather

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operations have on the utilization of the air facilities in the Northern areas?

#### IV. OPERATIONAL FACTORS

- A. What is the intelligence available on training programs in the LRAF? In the light of this intelligence, what is its likely aircrew capability for attacks against various targets in the continental US? Is this capability likely to vary according to type of target, e.g., cities vs. airfields?
- B. What is the likely ~~navigation~~<sup>ational</sup>, ~~targeting~~, and bombing accuracy of the LRAF against various types of targets and under varying weather condition?
- C. What is the present inflight refueling capability in the Soviet LRAF and how is it likely to be developed during the period of this estimate? "What operational limitations would be imposed on long range bombers by the use of TU-4 tankers? What effect would large scale inflight refueling operations have on: (1) present and future personnel training programs: (2) aircraft production programs and: (3) airfield requirements? What other range extension techniques are the Soviets considered to have perfected? What additional techniques are they likely to develop prior to mid-1958? How long would it take to convert TU-4's to tankers?

D/ What is the probable accuracy and reliability of various missile systems including submarine-launched missiles the USSR might use for attacks on the US and key overseas installations?

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- E. What are the various steps the USSR would have to go through to mount the attacks of which we estimate they are capable? What operational problems will they meet in launching a maximum initial strike in mid-1955 and mid-1958? What is the Soviet capability for dealing with the maintenance and operational problems in mounting large-scale attacks from bases in far northern areas?

V. SOVIET CAPABILITIES FOR ATTACK AGAINST KEY US OVERSEAS INSTALLATIONS

- A. What are Soviet capabilities for attacking key overseas installation with weapons other than those of the LRAF? Could IL-28's, for example, be employed effectively from Bloc bases against all key overseas installations within range? What, if any, forward staging would be required? To what extent would LRAF forces still be required to provide an adequate capability for attacking key overseas bases?
- B. What prior preparations would the USSR have to make for large-scale attacks on key US overseas installations? What would be the

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timing of such preparations prior to D-day? To what extent might such preparations be detectable?

VI. THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SURPRISE

- A. Assuming a Soviet effort to achieve optimum surprise in attack on the US, what limitations on their capabilities to attack the US and US overseas installations would they probably feel compelled to accept with respect to: (1) Choice of weapon (2) Number of weapons used (3) Choice of targets?
- B. To what extent would the Soviet estimate of the success they would be likely to achieve against various target systems affect their choice of methods and timing of attack?

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